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Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 FDRE-00 AID-05

VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /084 W
---------- 123722
R 131415Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7958

C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 0576

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AMEG
SUBJ: RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REF: BLANTYRE 0537 ; STATE 97854

MET WITH PRES BANDA IN ZOMBA TODAY AT HIS REQUEST. HE
FIRST BROUGHT UP MY TALK WITH MINISTER OF STATE MUWALO ON ABOVE
SUBJ (REFTEL 537) AND SAID HE WANTED US TO KNOW THAT HE FEELS
A SPECIAL REGARD AND ATTACHMENT TO TWO FOREIGN COUNTRIES, NAMELY
GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES; THAT HE WOULD LIKE PRES
FORD TO KNOW THAT MALAWI IS READY TO HELP WITH THE REFUGEE
PROBLEM. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION AS TO HOW WE MIGHT MOVE AHEAD
WITH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN MALAWI, HE PROPOSED THAT AS A FIRST
STEP THE USG SHOULD GIVE MALAWI SOME IDEA OF THE QUALIFICATIONS
AND SKILLS OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WHO WOULD CONSIDER SETTLEMENT
IN MALAWI. HE OBSERVED THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR CONSTRUCTION
ENGINEERS, BOTH IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND GENERAL BUILDING,
DOCTORS, SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS,
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS, ETC. HE REMARKED IN A FAVORABLE TONE THAT
RECENTLY A SOUTH KOREAN ROAD CONSTRUCTION FIRM HAS WON A BID
FOR A JOB HERE AND SAID SOUTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES WOULD BE MOST
WELCOME IN MALAWI WITH THE UNDERSTANDING, OF COURSE, THAT THEY
WOULD CAUSE NO TROUBLE OR DISRUPTION.
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I TOLD PRES BANDA THAT I WOULD TRY TO ASCERTAIN MORE
PRECISE DETAILS WITH REGARD TO SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHO MIGHT BE
INTERESTED IN COMING TO MALAWI AND WE AGREED THAT AT SUCH TIME
I WOULD REPORT BACK TO HIM.

COMMENT: I BELIEVE BANDA WAS WHOLLY SINCERE IN HIS OFFER
AND THAT MALAWI WOULD TAKE A MODEST NUMBER OF REFUGEES AND GIVE
THEM REASONABLY GOOD JOBS PROVIDED WE CAN MESH PEOPLE AVAILABLE
WITH MALAWI'S NEEDS. I THINK THE GOM WOULD OFFER THEM SALARIES
AND HOUSING AT LEAST EQUIVALENT TO THAT PROVIDED FOR MALAWIANS
IN THE SAME CATEGORIES AND PERHAPS SOMEWHAT BETTER. THE CLIMATE
HERE IS HEALTHY, THE COST OF LIVING RELATIVELY LOW AND MALWIANS
IN THE ABOVE CATEGORIES SEEM NORMALLY ABLE TO AFFORD A MODEST
HOUSE WITH MODERN CONVENIENCES AND A SMALL CAR.

BY "CAUSE NO TROUBLE" BANDA MEANS STAYING OUT OF LOCAL
POLITICS OR ENGAGING IN CRITICISM OF THE PRES OR HIS
ADMINISTRATION. ABIDING BY THIS CAVEAT, I THINK VIETNAMESE
REFUGEES WOULD BE ABLE TO LIVE HERE QUITE COMFORTABLY. BANDA
DID NOT MENTION WHETHER SUCH RESETTLEMENT WOULD BE PERMANENT
OR TEMPORARY AND I WOULD GUESS THIS QUESTION IS STILL OPEN AND MIGHT
BETTER BE ADDRESSED WHEN WE SEE IF WE HAVE SOMETHING TO PROPOSE.

THE PRESIDENT'S MANNER WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL THROUGHOUT OUR
CONVERSATION AND HE LOOKED VERY RELAXED AND REFRESHED IN CONTRAST
TO HIS APPEARANCE ON HIS ARRIVAL BACK FROM LONDON LAST SATURDAY.
STEVENSON

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Type: TE
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